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For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE STATE PRISON, OR
PENITENTIARY HOUSE IN NEW-YORK;
BY ONE OF THE INSPECTORS OF THE
PRISON.

(Concluded from page 177.)

Hospital.

A physician is appointed by the inspectors to attend the prison, and is allowed an annual salary of two hundred dollars. A large and airy apartment, on the second floor of the north west wing of the prison, is appropriated to an *hospital*, where the sick are conveyed, if, in the opinion of the physician, they need medical aid. As the prison is situated in a distant part of the city, and accidents may sometimes happen which demand immediate medical assistance, a suitable person is provided by the physician, to reside constantly in the prison, in the capacity of an *apothecary*. He is allowed diet and lodging. He prescribes for the sick, if necessary, in the absence of the physician. Fit persons are selected from the prisoners as *nurses*, and are under the direction of the apothecary. The physician visits the sick, and prescribes for them twice in each week, or oftener, if their diseases require greater attention. Any changes in diet, dress, or employment, which he may think necessary to the gene-

ral health of the prisoners, are represented by him in writing to the inspectors, to be considered by them, and carried into effect so far as may be consistent with the principles and objects of the institution.

Under the direction of the physician, the apothecary keeps a book, in which are inserted the *names* of the sick, *their ages, occupations, and diseases*, the commencement and duration of their maladies, the termination of them, the number cured, relieved, or whose cases terminate fatally. He also registers the nature and quantity of medicines administered, and the diet and general regimen, including cloathing, prescribed by the physician.

Means for warm and cold bathing are provided, and a *machine* for the purpose of affording exercise to those who are confined to the hospital. Those who are capable of taking exercise in the open air, are permitted to do so, under the direction of the apothecary.

A separate kitchen is provided for the hospital, called the *hospital-kitchen*, upon the ground floor of the same wing, where diet for the sick is prepared. This is committed to the management of a suitable person chosen from among the prisoners. In this kitchen, three copper boilers of an oval form with flat bottoms, are put up in the manner recommended by Count Ru-

ford. The largest contains twelve gallons, the others about seven gallons each. One bushel of coals, which costs 36 cents, is all the fuel wanted in this kitchen for one week, and besides cooking, heats the water that may be necessary in the hospital. About twenty-five persons, on an average, are fed from this kitchen each day.

Many of those who came into the prison with constitutions greatly impaired by excessive drinking, debauchery, and vicious habits, after being some time used to the system of temperance, order, and industry established in the prison, have become healthy and vigorous.

Reformation.

The end of human punishments is the prevention of crimes. In the endeavour to attain this end, three things are to be considered; the amendment of the offender; the deterring of others by his example; reparation to society and the party injured. Of these objects, the first without doubt is of the highest importance. Society cannot be better secured against crimes, than by eradicating the evil passions and corrupt habits which are the sources of guilt. The operation of punishment as a terror to others, is generally considered as momentary and uncertain in its effects; for men are often found so regardless of the future, as to perpetrate crimes at the instant they are witnessing the most dreadful execution of a criminal for a similar offence. The punishment of death precludes the possibility of the amendment of the criminal by any human means. Every hope of reformation is at once cut off without a single effort to accomplish so just and benevolent a purpose. Society and the injured party are indeed, in the strictest sense, avenged on the head of the guilty offender. Justice, however,

not revenge, is the true foundation of the right of punishment. But it is not the design of the present work to discuss the principles of a code of criminal law, or to point out the errors which have been perpetuated by the passions or ignorance of legislators.

If society is effectually secured against future mischief by the imprisonment of the offender, it is that mode of punishment also which affords the only chance of reclaiming him from evil. It is by confinement to hard labour in a penitentiary house, that the primary and legitimate purpose of human punishment is to be effected. The characters of men are endlessly diversified, and their motives and actions assume a thousand different hues. In considering convicts, we may, in general, distinguish them into three classes: Men grown old in habits of profligacy and violence, unfeeling and desperate offenders, who discover no signs of contrition, and yield little hope of amendment: those who in early life have received a moral and religious education, and, though afterwards led by passion and evil example into the commission of crimes, still retain some sense of virtue: those who, having sustained a fair reputation, are arrested for the first public offence, before they have become familiar with vice; who wished, perhaps, to return to the path of virtue, but had not energy enough to retrace their steps.

In forming an opinion of the depravity of convicts, nothing can be more unjust than to confound these different classes in the same judgment. All were once innocent; but blinded by passion, allured by present temptation, they have mistaken their true interest, and been gradually led into the depths of vice and criminality. In designating punish-

ments for various offences, the legislator can regard only the tendency of actions to injure society, and distribute those punishments according to the comparative degrees of harm such actions may produce. He cannot foresee those circumstances in the moral condition of the agent which may justly lessen or aggravate his guilt; and by the wise constitution and jealous policy of our laws, judges are not vested with any discretionary power to apportion the punishment according to a greater or less criminality of intention in the offender. It is in a penitentiary house that an opportunity is afforded of distinguishing the shades of guilt in different offenders, and of correcting that error and injustice, in some degree inseparable from the best system of laws, by which persons, whose guilt admits of different degrees, are subjected to the same punishment.* It is for those to whom the superintendence of such an institution is intrusted, to effect, as far as possible, the amendment of the delinquent, and thus to fulfil the highest duty of humanity. And it is with no small pleasure that the Inspectors have observed, that a number of those who have been discharged from the prison confided to their care, have continued in habits of industry and sobriety, and bid fair to become good members of society. It would, no doubt, be interesting to the philanthropist, to be informed of the particular inci-

dents in the lives of such men, and the circumstances which have furnished ground to predict the rectitude of their future conduct. But this would, in some degree, lead the writer beyond his immediate object; and motives of prudence and charity ought, perhaps, to induce him, for the present, to forbear such a recital.

The most efficacious means of reformation are to be found in that system of regular labour and exact temperance, by which habits of industry and sobriety are formed. The inspectors have not been unmindful of other means of amendment, less immediately connected with the nature of the punishment to which the convicts are sentenced. By the great attention paid to cleanliness in every part of the prison, they have shown their opinion of its importance in aiding reformation. Its benign influence on the physical character, though well understood by many, is not duly estimated by the bulk of mankind. Though its effects on bodily health be more obvious, its less striking but equally certain effect on the mind has been no where more fully experienced than in this prison. It is found to soften the temper, meliorate the disposition, and to produce a regard to temperance, order, and industry; and by exciting more agreeable and tranquil sensations, to render men susceptible of good impressions, and thereby conduce to their future amendment.*

In the winter, those of the con-

* This topic may be enlarged upon in the conclusion, when we come to speak of pardons. It would greatly assist the Inspectors in the just exercise of their power, if the judges who sentence convicts were required to furnish a statement of all the circumstances that attended the trial, or which may have come to their knowledge, and which may serve to render the guilt of the convict, in their opinion, more or less aggravated.

* Count Rumford, (vol. i, page 34), in his Essays, speaking of the good effects produced on the mendicants in the House of Industry, at Munich, by cleanliness, says, that "virtue never dwelt long with filth and nastiness; nor do I believe there ever was a person *scrupulously attentive to cleanliness*, who was a consummate villain."

victs who have appeared to be most meritorious, are allowed, with the approbation of the keeper, to be taught reading, writing, and arithmetic. Teachers are selected from such of them as are competent, and twenty are permitted to meet together daily with one of the keepers, and to receive instruction for about two hours in the evening. This is considered as a privilege, and conferred on those only, who, by a peaceable, industrious, and regular course of conduct, have shown a disposition towards reformation. It is a further requisite for admission into this school, that the person should have performed labour above his task to the value of four shillings a week, which is to pay for the implements of writing, light, and fuel.

Care is taken, as far as possible, to separate the less vicious from the more hardened and daring offenders. About twenty-two of the most obdurate criminals are kept confined, and at work in separate apartments, and are not suffered to come out, or to have communication with other prisoners, but are constantly watched by keepers day and night. Experience will evince, that among any given number of convicts, one tenth part may be fairly considered as desperate and hardened villains, who appear incorrigible; and it is of importance that such should be carefully selected and separated from the rest, as it is more probable they may, by proper management, be reformed.

As another means of reformation, attention is paid to their religious and moral instruction.

A large room in the prison, very neatly finished, is set apart for the purpose of divine worship. This room, and the gallery round it, will accomodate about six hundred persons,

In this place, the prisoners are assembled on the first day of each week, when one of their number reads a sermon and prayers, and the rest join in singing psalms.

It is expected that the public preachers of the gospel in the city, will cheerfully devote a small portion of their time to the service of these unhappy beings, who have so much need of their instruction, and of the counsel of the truly good and benevolent.

As no distinction of sect exists in this great work of charity and benevolence, it is hoped that religious characters of every Christian denomination will feel it their duty to visit them on the day set apart for divine worship; since it is obvious that a due attention to this important duty, must produce the most salutary effects on the minds and conduct of the prisoners, and most powerfully promote the great plan of reformation.*

Connected with this scheme of punishment and reformation, is another object, which, though of inferior importance in a moral view, is yet deserving of attention. This is, indemnity to the community for the expense of the conviction and maintenance of the offender. It is highly probable, that, with due management and economy, the profit of the labour of the convicts may be rendered equal to their support. Such a result, however, has not been anticipated by the zealous friends of reform in penal law in Europe. They have regarded it as the indispensable duty of legislators, to meliorate the laws, and correct the abuses of prisons, without count-

* "As rational and immortal beings we owe this to them, nor can any criminality of theirs justify our neglect in this particular."
HOWARD.

ing the cost of their justice or humanity. In Pennsylvania, we are assured, that the experiment has been attended with success;—and when the improved system of the penitentiary house of this state has had time to operate fully, there can be no doubt of a result equally favourable. It ought to have fair scope, and not be thwarted in its infancy, by distrust, or the selfish views of individuals or particular classes of men. A wise legislature will extend its concern to the whole community, and, regardless of private interests, steadily pursue a plan the best calculated to promote the general good.

In the first establishment of the prison, the Inspectors have had to encounter all the difficulties of a new experiment, with the disadvantage of imperfect knowledge in many branches of manufacture. A system was to be formed, by which above two hundred convicts, many of them hardened, desperate, and refractory, and many ignorant or incapacitated through infirmity or disease, might be brought into a regular course of productive labour. To find suitable employment for so many persons, was a matter of considerable difficulty. In the choice of occupations, regard must be had to those which require the least capital, are most productive of profit, and most consistent with the health of the convicts and the general security of the prison. Among the different kinds of manufactures, that of shoes was first introduced, and has been found the most convenient and profitable. The capital required for the purchase of the raw material is not large, and the manufactured article will always meet with a ready sale; since the consumption of so indispensable a part of dress is great, and continually in-

creasing, beyond the power of the tradesmen of the city to supply.* The manufacture of nails and other articles has been carried on for about two years. This required more capital; and it was not until very lately that sufficient experience was gained, in the purchase of stock, and the use of machinery, to enable the Inspectors to manage this branch of business with advantage. These circumstances, and many others that might be detailed, which necessarily attend an infant establishment, and which diminished the profits of the past years, will, in future, cease to produce expense and embarrassment. It is doubtful, whether the manufacture of nails, and of several other articles, ought to be carried on to a great extent, as they require too large a capital in advance. Experience will furnish, every year, grounds for improvement in the mode of conducting the branches of industry, or in the introduction of more advantageous kinds of labour; and there is every reason to believe, that, with a competent capital, the business may be rendered so productive, as to defray the expenses of conviction and maintenance of the prisoners. Calculations, however, founded on the statements of the past year, will not furnish adequate means of judging with certainty of the future profits which may be made to arise from the labour of the convicts.

That the number of convicts has increased since the erection of the State Prison is evident. But to infer from that fact, that the new and milder scheme of punishment has been less efficacious in pre-

* Large quantities of shoes have heretofore been brought from New-Jersey, and the Eastern States, and sold in New-York.

venting crimes, than the old and sanguinary system, would be a most partial and erroneous conclusion. The true causes of this increase of crimes are the rapid growth of our population and wealth; the consequent luxury and corruption of manners, particularly in the capital of the State; and the great number of indigent and vicious emigrants from Europe and the West Indies, driven hither by the disordered and distressful condition of their native countries, or to escape the vengeance of the laws.

More than three-fourths of the whole number of crimes are committed in the city of New-York. Its population has almost doubled in ten years, and the increase of its trade and wealth is unequalled in the history of commercial states. It is certain also, that under the present system of punishment, a much less number of offenders escape conviction. Individuals do not, from a sense of the terrible consequences to the party, refuse to prosecute; nor juries, from motives of compassion, forbear to convict the guilty. This is a most salutary consequence of the melioration of our penal laws.

The corruption of morals engenders those crimes which pollute society, and undermine the security of life and property. It is the duty of government to begin at the source, and to endeavour, by every rational and practicable expedient, to prevent crimes, rather than to apply the painful and uncertain remedy of punishment to evils grown formidable by negligence. It is in vain, under the best devised plan of punishment, to expect that crimes should be diminished or exterminated, if laws are not framed to check the progress of vice, and to arrest the first steps of guilt.

It is well known, that the greater number of crimes originate in the

irregular and vicious habits produced by intoxication, and by the idle, low, and dissipated practices encouraged in taverns and tippling-houses. There are few criminals whose gradual depravation cannot be traced to this source. It is well ascertained, that in this city there are more than 1200 taverns or shops, where spirituous liquors are retailed in drams or in the form of grog. In eight or ten considerable streets, one fourth part of the whole number of houses are taverns and groceries, or, in other words, dram-shops. The number of taverns is unlimited by law. By the city-charter, the power of granting licenses is vested in the mayor, who is the sole judge of the propriety of granting them, or of their number. Thirty shillings are paid for each license, four fifths of which sum goes into the city-treasury, and the residue to the mayor. While a revenue is derived to the corporation from these licenses, it is not to be expected that there will be much solicitude to lessen their number, or to examine minutely into the merits of the applicants for them. Some regulations ought to be adopted for the reformation of the police in this respect. Grocers ought to be strictly prohibited from retailing liquors in drams. The number of taverns ought to be greatly diminished. Licenses should not be granted but to persons who are recommended by five known and respectable citizens, and under much larger penalties than at present, to enforce their observance of the laws.* At present, the temptation to the indigent and labouring classes of people to indulge

* In the town of Boston there are fifty taverns or persons licensed to retail liquors in small quantities. Three or four times that number, one would imagine, would be more than sufficient for the city of New-York.

in drink is so powerful, and the gratification so easy, at every turn of the street, that the greater number spend a large portion of their time and earnings in repeated indulgences of this depraved appetite, during the day, and return to their families in a state of partial or complete intoxication. The pernicious consequences of such habits, to the individual and to society, are too striking to need any elaborate description, to enforce the propriety of adopting every suitable means of legislative and municipal regulation, for their prevention.

A further source of vice and criminality is to be found in the horse-races which regularly take place in New York and some of the neighbouring counties. These draw together crowds of people, who engage in wagering, all kinds of games of chance, and in debauchery, which produce habits that lead to the ruin of many, and drive numbers to the commission of crimes. Horse-races, billiard tables, and all games of chance, ought to be strictly prohibited. Baiting of animals with dogs and every species of amusement which may tend to harden the heart, and render the manners of the people ferocious, ought to be prevented by a well regulated police. Laws are made for the preservation of decency and order on the first day of the week; and it remains only to have them more faithfully executed. Perhaps there is no city of equal extent, where fewer crimes escape detection and punishment, or where greater order and tranquillity prevail. Too much praise cannot be bestowed on those to whom the peace and safety of our city is entrusted, for their unwearied attention and vigilance in the discharge of duties, the extent and importance of which are not generally understood or fully estimated. But, notwithstanding the improved state of our police, and the

care of our magistrates, every year furnishes new objects of attention, evils which demand additional remedies, and more powerful reasons for devising and applying them in the best and most effectual manner.

Another object, more immediately connected with the subject of this work, is the present mode of punishment for petty crimes. The only prison in this city for the punishment of those convicted of small thefts and other petty offences, is the Bridewell, part of which is also appropriated to the safe-keeping of prisoners before their trial or conviction. At present, vagrants, disorderly persons, and convicts for petty offences, are confined in this prison; and are put into rooms together, without any discrimination, or regard to difference of character. No proper or adequate means are used to prevent profanity, intoxication, filth, or idleness. In this condition, corrupting and corrupted, their imprisonment, so far from tending to produce the amendment of the culprits, or to secure society against the effects of their future misconduct, serves, by the contagion of example and the exasperation of bad passions, to render them an hundred fold more vicious and untractable. It is, in truth, a nursery of criminals for the State Prison. As a remedy for this defect in the penal system, it is suggested, that a building should be erected by the corporation, large enough to contain sixty cells, of the same dimensions as those in the State Prison;—that the police magistrates should have power to try, in a summary way, and to sentence to solitary confinement in these cells, vagrants, drunkards, riotous and disorderly persons, &c. for a time not exceeding thirty days;—that the quarter sessions of the city should sentence persons convicted of assaults and batteries, petit larcenies, and

such offences as are not aggravated or atrocious, for a time not exceeding sixty or ninety days. The convicts should be kept in these cells in perfect solitude, and on spare diet, in the manner practised in the State Prison. Such a punishment, for sixty days, would be more severe and terrible, and tend more to the prevention of crimes, than confinement, for one or two years, to hard labour in the State Prison. It would also tend more to the reformation of the offender himself. Detached from vicious companions, from temptation, and from all means of gratifying his depraved appetites, conscience would have time to awaken a sense of guilt and remorse for his past folly and misconduct.

Should a plan of such obvious utility be adopted and carried into execution, it would not then be necessary to send convicts to the State Prison for a shorter period than three years. For every person once confined in the solitary cells, who should, after his release, commit a second offence, would deserve to be sentenced to hard labour for, at least, three years. Indeed it might, with propriety, be left to the discretion of the court, in certain cases of second offences, to inflict the same punishment as in cases of grand larceny; since it can hardly be supposed, that any material or lasting effect can be produced on a criminal, by the labour and discipline of a penitentiary house, in a shorter time than four or five years.—And if he is incorrigible by means of solitude, temperance, and cleanliness, he will not merit if he is guilty of a second offence, a punishment less severe than imprisonment for that length of time.

Before concluding this account, it may be proper to make a few remarks, the result of some observation and experience, on a subject which

may have an essential influence on the present scheme of punishments.

It has been observed by Beccaria, whose opinions have the force of axioms in the science of penal law, that, “as punishments become more mild, clemency and pardon become less necessary;”—that “clemency belongs to the legislator, and not to the executor of the laws; a virtue which ought to shine in the code not in private judgments. To show mankind that crimes may be pardoned, or that punishment is not the necessary consequence, is to nourish the flattering hope of impunity.”—“Let then the executor of the law be inexorable, but let the legislator be tender, indulgent, and humane.”*

These principles, though just in theory, necessarily presuppose a perfect system of penal law, by which each punishment is with such exact justice apportioned to each crime, that no difference of circumstances can arise in any case, which ought to vary the punishment prescribed for the particular offence. No code so perfect has yet been framed, and until such an one is promulgated, it is necessary that the power of pardoning should reside somewhere, to prevent that injustice in particular cases which the legislator did not foresee, or could not avoid. By our constitution this power is confided to the governor, the chief executive magistrate.†

And under the penal laws, except in those cases where the punishment of death still remains, the power of pardoning may be exercised without

* *Dei Delitti e delle Pene*, § 20.—A misura che le pene divengono più dolci, la clemenza ed il perdono diventano meno necessari: &c.

† In cases of treason and murder, the governor cannot pardon, but may relieve the convict until the next meeting of the legislature, who may pardon if they think fit.

violating the principle advanced by the philosopher of Milan. It may be asserted, that, in the deliberate and impartial manner in which justice is administered in our courts, it is scarcely possible that any man can be presented by a grand jury, tried and convicted by a petit jury of twelve men, in the presence of the court and the world, without a degree of guilt deserving of some punishment. Imprisonment for a short period, under the mild and humane regulations of the State Prison, cannot, in cases the most favourable to the prisoner, be deemed unjust. It may be laid down, then, as a general principle, that no person, convicted of a crime and sentenced to imprisonment, ought to be pardoned, until he has suffered a punishment proportioned to the degree of his guilt, or at least so much as may satisfy the community he has injured. Under the guidance of this principle, it is believed, that the power of pardoning may be made conducive to a more perfect dispensation of justice, and subservient to the plan of reformation intended by a penitentiary prison. It will not be thought useless to endeavour to fix some general rules for the exercise of a power, which, if arbitrary and capricious, may produce consequences neither foreseen nor intended; but if exerted with sound discretion, so far from weakening the laws, will strengthen their operation.

1. Where the punishment is fixed by law to a crime of a general legal description, comprehending a great variety of different acts, which must, from the course of human conduct, be accompanied with evidence of greater or less depravity; there this attribute of the chief executive magistrate seems necessary, to remedy the imperfection of the general law, and to render the punishment more equitably proportioned to the guilt of

the offender; since, from the inevitable want of foresight in the legislature, of the circumstances of each case, it could not be so predetermined by them. Thus forgery and counterfeiting, as well as passing money, knowing the same to be forged or counterfeit, punished by imprisonment for life, is a crime, the objects of which are endlessly diversified, comprehending acts of different degrees of turpitude.*

2. Where the law has only defined a limit in the time of imprisonment, leaving it to the discretion of the judge to fix the duration of punishment within that limit, according to the circumstances of each case; there it may be generally said, that the executive ought not to interpose; unless when the discretion of the court has been manifestly exercised under some misapprehension, or where circumstances, favourable to the convict, come to light after trial, of which he could not avail himself at the time, but had they been known, ought to have prevented or lessened his punishment.

3. Unequivocal evidence of reformation in a convict, after his imprisonment; to ascertain which, as well as the propriety and safety of discharging a convict before the expiration of his term of punishment, the judgment of the Inspectors of

* It may be fairly questioned, whether this and some other crimes are not improperly punished by imprisonment for life. If the sentence did not exceed a certain number of years, it would be in the power of the court to apply the punishment in a manner more justly proportioned to the offence: there would then be rarely, if ever, any occasion for the executive to remit the sentence. Most of the governments of Europe, excepting England, have, in circumstances of society and manners far less favourable than those of this country, gone further in the melioration of their penal laws; and the punishment of death is gradually disappearing from their codes.

the prison, from their situation, may be of essential importance. Indeed, this precaution has been taken by the late, and present governor of the State, who have applied for the requisite information to the Inspectors, the majority of whom have joined in a recommendation for pardon, where they thought it clearly merited by the convict. Previous to such recommendation, however, the inspectors think it their duty to inquire,—whether the prisoner was convicted by clear and undoubted testimony; which may be ascertained by the report of the judge before whom he was tried;—whether the circumstances attending the commission of the crime denote a greater or less degree of depravity; whether the prisoner has already suffered a punishment sufficient to satisfy society, and to afford a reasonable ground to believe that his release will not diminish the dread of future punishment in him, or inspire the hope of impunity in others;—whether, while in prison, he has conducted himself with uniform decency, industry, and sobriety, and has never attempted to violate any of its regulations;—and, lastly, whether from what is known of his temper, character, and deportment, it is probable, that if restored to society, he will become a peaceable, honest, and industrious citizen. These inquiries ought to be satisfactorily answered in favour of the convict, before he is recommended for pardon; for it is not a common or ordinary course of good conduct and industry, but a pre-eminent and unexceptionable behaviour, that should entitle a prisoner to this grace. A convict radically and incurably depraved, in hope of gaining favour, may, for a season, so far disguise his genuine character, as to deceive his keepers and inspectors. Sufficient time should be allowed to discover his real disposition, which, on some

occasion, at an unguarded moment, will show itself. In short, pardon ought never to be granted from the momentary impulse of compassion, the indulgence of which may be gratifying to the individual, but, as regulated by no fixed principle, must be injurious to the public; nor ought it to be granted, merely at the instance of friends or relations, or from considerations of family, but from the clear and unbiassed dictates of justice and humanity, and in such a manner that the community may be satisfied that the influence of the law is not impaired, nor its severity relaxed, without sufficient reason.

No man who enters the prison with vicious habits, can be reasonably expected to be divested of them in less than four or five years; and it would greatly injure the penitentiary system, to pardon any prisoner before the expiration of that time, unless in extraordinary cases, which may possibly, but very rarely, happen. When sentenced to imprisonment for life, no person ought to be released until after seven years confinement. If, under the circumstances which have been mentioned, and on principles here stated, pardons are sometimes granted, instead of counteracting the force of the law, they may be made to harmonize with and support the general scheme of punishments so wisely adopted. Its success must, in a great measure, depend on the wisdom of the regulations devised for the internal management of the prison, and on the prudence, disinterested attention, and perseverance of those to whom that management is entrusted.

To exhibit a simple and faithful account of those regulations, and to furnish such useful hints as the writer, from his own experience and the suggestions of others, could impart, is the purpose of the preceding pages. He is sensible that the plan of inte-

rior regulation is far from being perfect; but every year will add to its improvement. For, besides relieving the counties from the great burden of keeping convicts, and diminishing the chances of escape, by bringing them all into one prison, under a more vigilant inspection, the establishment of a State Prison presents the best opportunity, by the magnitude and liberality of its plan, for the formation of a well digested scheme of internal management and economy, and the full execution of the only just and beneficent system yet devised for the punishment and correction of criminals. The New-York State Prison will furnish a model for others, which the increase of population and growth of luxury may render necessary in the distant parts of this extensive country.* And, whatever may be the future condition of mankind, this institution will reflect lasting honour on the State; become a durable monument of the wisdom, justice, and humanity of its legislators, more glorious than the most splendid achievements of conquerors or kings; and be remembered when the magnificent structures of folly and pride, with their founders, are alike exterminated and forgotten.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

AN ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC IN THE
NAME AND BEHALF OF THE SOCIETY
OF MOTIVEMONGERS.

ADDRESSES are become fashionable, and experience shows they are useful. They have made the world acquainted with thousands, who otherwise would have passed through life in undistinguished obscurity, and sunk quietly into obli-

vion, without a memento of their existence. O! the astonishing power of addresses!—They can hold up for present admiration, in defiance of vices—and hand down to posterity, in spite of insignificance.

It cannot, however, for a moment be imagined, that *this* address is presented with any such servile view.—My Lords, the public contain within themselves all the vital principles of real greatness, and therefore can receive no additional notoriety. To encrease their importance, by any address, would be impossible; to attempt it, would be vain and presumptuous. But, lest any one should be inclined to put such an invidious construction on my conduct in this affair, I shall here subjoin, for his satisfaction, a full and true account of every why and wherefore by which I am actuated.

Be it known then, that to lay open to the consideration of the public, the nature and design of Motivemongery; to enumerate, for their information, the qualifications required in its professors; to point out some of the advantages to be derived from the institution; to detect some pretenders, who impose on the ignorant, and by assuming our name, bring disgrace on our society; and to propose some plans for the farther improvement of Motivemongery.—These are, may it please your worship, the sole reasons for presenting this address.

Motivemongery is in the conduct of life, what well-founded theory is in philosophy: by the one we discover the secret springs of action: by the other we account for the phenomena of nature. Whilst we live in the world, we must judge of the actions of mankind, and pronounce them good or bad according to their natural tendency, or influence on society. But, if we judge candidly, our decisions will be influenced

* Similar prisons are already established in New-Jersey and Virginia, and others are proposed to be erected in Massachusetts and South-Carolina.